

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Thursday, July 13, 2017, for the purpose of meeting with the Greenbelt East Advisory Coalition (GEAC).

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:35p.m. It was held at the Hunting Ridge Community Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Leta M. Mach was unable to attend due to travel.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Nicole Ard, City Manager and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Thomas Crandall, Terry Benedict, Marsha Caine, Rohanie Bacchus, Charlene MacAdams, Austin Henry, Toni Mathewson, Tom Renahan, Nicole Williams and Layne Lisinger, Greenbelt News Review.

Mayor Jordan opened the meeting. There were introductions.

City Finances

Mayor Jordan read Question 1. Mr. Herling read the answer. Mayor Jordan stated that condominium values had taken the worst hit during the recession. There was discussion that the FBI decision may impact property values. Mayor Jordan noted that Greenbelt Station was a bright spot with increasing property values and the development is built.

Mayor Jordan read Question 2. Ms. Davis read the answer. She noted that the Bradford Pear trees were in decline and referenced the tree master plan which discusses the City's future tree replacement plans. Mayor Jordan referenced the Cherrywood Lane Complete Street project and Greenbelt Road Study. Ms. Davis mentioned the Attick Park parking lot project and new trail connecting Greenbelt Station to Cherrywood Lane.

Mr. Crandall asked about the office vacancy rate. Council discussed the proposed food truck hub at Capital Office Park.

Police and Crime Statistics

Mayor Jordan read Question 1. Mr. Roberts indicated that there was a staffing shortage in the Police Department. He believed the City needed to hire a Police Chief. Mayor Jordan indicated that officers were retiring and the City had planned for this. Ms. Davis stated that certain careers were not the most popular right now, Police work being one of these. Mr. Herling noted there was competition from other Police agencies.

Mayor Jordan read Question 2. Ms. Ard discussed a handout provided by Acting Chief Kemp. She reported the City was not seeing gang activity or playground vandalism. Ms. Ard indicated

that anyone can go to the City website or crimereports.com to obtain specific information about crimes in their neighborhood. Mayor Jordan discussed the weekly crime report.

Mayor Jordan read Question 3 and noted that generally crime is going down, but there had been a regional increase in car thefts. It was noted that homicides were higher than past years. There was also discussion about airbag theft and other vehicular vandalism.

Mayor Jordan read Question 4 and discussed the ongoing Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) study. Ms. Pope indicated that PSAC has drafted an extensive report that had not yet been presented to Council and Council would hold a work session on this report in the future.

Ms. MacAdams asked about homeowner associations and the City working together on the security camera issue. Mayor Jordan responded that Council needed to review the PSAC report. It was noted there were staffing, information technology challenges, cost issues and other logistical complications regarding implementing more cameras.

Poor Lighting and School Issues

Mayor Jordan read Question 1 and discussed the City's efforts to work with Pepco and State Highway Administration (SHA) on lighting upgrades. There was discussion of lighting along Hanover Parkway.

Mr. Crandall indicated Question 3 was through him. Ms. Davis stressed that the City was trying to get Greenbelt Station students reassigned to Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Ms. Pope stressed that sometimes there are valid reasons for boundary decisions and she noted that the school system has tight standards.

Common Ownership Communities

Mayor Jordan noted that two Greenbelt residents, Aaron Marcavitch and Nicole Williams, were serving on the Common Ownership Communities Task Force. Ms. Williams explained the role of the Commission and offered to help.

There was discussion of snow removal and it was noted that nothing had changed.

Mayor Jordan read Question 3 and noted that Mr. Moran was the lead City staff person on legislative items. There was also discussion of the Community Association Institute's (CAI) Legislative Action Committee.

GEAC Community Interests

Mayor Jordan read Question 1. Mr. Roberts stated that concerns about the safety of the Mandan Basketball Court were a failure by the City's Police Department. He favored providing recreation opportunities in the neighborhood and wanted to make it a safe place for kids to play there.

Ms. Davis believed there were things (half-court, lighting, cameras, etc.) the City could do to improve public safety there. Mr. Herling suggested making it a special place by holding special events there. Mr. Roberts did not want the bad guys to win. Ms. MacAdams wanted the place cleaned up (better lighting, cut bushes, etc.). Mr. Putens recounted the problems there, noting that a little girl almost died there.

Mayor Jordan read Question 2. He reported that park rangers monitor the dog park. Ms. Pope stated that the license needs to change to an annual license. She also stressed the need for a second dog park. Mr. Putens suggested a public-private partnership with Franklin Park to locate a dog park there. Mr. Roberts noted that other jurisdictions charge a significant fee for their dog park and this provides resources to maintain the park.

Mr. Henry believed the responses on Question 3, 4 and 6 were sufficient and suggested that discussion be limited on these questions. Mr. Crandall asked if there were standards for electric vehicle charging stations. Mr. Herling responded there are State standards.

Ms. Bacchus asked about the polling place for Precinct 18. It was noted the polling place had been changed to Schrom Hills Park.

Ms. Ard asked GEAC to provide feedback as part of the Recreation and Park Facilities Master Plan process.

There was discussion of upcoming events including National Night Out.

Mayor Jordan thanked GEAC for hosting the meeting.

The meeting ended at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*